

1900.

NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND CONTINGENTS FOR SOUTH AFRICA.

TELEGRAM FROM THE PREMIER TO, AND REPLIES FROM, MEMBERS OF BOTH BRANCHES OF THE LEGISLATURE ON THE SUBJECT OF SENDING A SECOND CONTINGENT, &c.

Laid upon the Table of both Houses of the General Assembly by Leave.

TELEGRAM from the PREMIER to MEMBERS of BOTH BRANCHES of the LEGISLATURE on the Subject of sending a Second Contingent, and equipping the Hotchkiss Battery offered by the Armstrong-Elswick Company.

In respect to the present position in the Transvaal, the Government are of the opinion that, in the interests of the Empire, New Zealand should send a second contingent similar to the first. Recognising the constitutional position, and before any offer is made to the Imperial authorities, or definite responsibility is assumed, I desire to have your views upon the question. You will be pleased to hear that the Armstrong-Elswick Company offer the Government of New Zealand gratuitously for use at the end of the war four rifle Hotchkiss machine-guns, with pack-saddle equipment complete, of latest pattern, suitable for cavalry or mounted infantry, accompanied by an expert instructor. The Agent-General asks if we will supply forty horses and thirty men, and to offer the whole to the British Government. We are of the opinion that this offer should be accepted. What do you say?

Reply by memo. as early as possible on the two questions submitted.
Wellington, 16th December, 1899.

R. J. SEDDON.

REPLIES FROM MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Rt. Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

Port Chalmers, 20th December, 1899.

I APPROVE of sending second contingent similar to last to South Africa, also extra forty horses and thirty men in order that colony may possess four guns on termination of war. I shall support vote for those purposes.

E. G. ALLEN.

Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, Wellington.

Dunedin North, 20th December, 1899.

BACK up the Empire by all means, and accept Armstrong-Elswick offer.

JAMES ALLEN.

Hon. R. J. Seddon, Wellington.

Dunedin, 20th December, 1899.

AM of opinion that it is our duty in the interests of the Empire, and honour of New Zealand, to send a second contingent. Hope Government will do all in its power to assist those who are so willing to help in various ways. Think also that the Armstrong offer should be accepted. Would it not be wise if contingent do go to send trained nurses to accompany?

J. F. ARNOLD.

SIR,—

14, Brandon Street, Wellington, N.Z., 20th December, 1899.

In reply to your telegram of yesterday's date, I have the honour to say that I favoured the sending of the New Zealand Contingent to South Africa in October last mainly for its moral effect as a recognition of our Imperial responsibilities and a symbol of Imperial unity. The proposal to despatch a second contingent for the same purpose I approve still more emphatically, because, while confirming the moral lesson of the first, it would also have a practical and immediate utility for the purpose of the war far beyond what there was ground for expecting three months ago.

1—H. 61.